

allowing the player to designate [designating] a chosen number,
from none to all, of said initial displayed symbols for replacement;

selecting said chosen number of replacement symbols;

replacing said chosen number of initial symbols on said monitor
with replacement symbols;

determining whether said replacement symbols and any remaining
initial symbols arrayed in said separate boxes of said multiple symbol columns and rows
constitute a winning combination; and,

rewarding a winning combination.

15. (Twice Amended) The method of claim 13 [14] wherein said
replacement symbol is replaced at the player's option if it is the same as the initial
symbol it replaces.

16. (Amended) The method of claim 13 [14] wherein said replacement
symbol will be automatically replaced if it is the same as the initial symbol it replaces.

18. (Four Times Amended) A method of operating an electronic gaming
apparatus having a plurality of symbols and background colors arrayed in separate boxes
of multiple columns and rows on its monitor comprising the steps of:

selecting initial symbols and initial background colors for said
symbols to be so arrayed in said separate boxes of said multiple columns and rows;

allowing the player to designate [designating] a chosen number,
from none to all, of said initial symbols and initial background colors for replacement;

selecting said chosen number of replacement symbols and
background colors;

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replacing said chosen number of initial symbols and initial background colors on said monitor with replacement symbols and replacement background colors; and,

determining whether said replacement symbols and replacement background colors, together with any remaining initial symbols and initial background colors arrayed in said separate boxes of said multiple columns and rows, constitute a winning combination; and,

rewarding a winning combination.

31. (Amended) A method of operating an electronic gaming apparatus having a plurality of symbols arrayed in multiple symbol columns and rows on its monitor comprising the steps of:

selecting initial symbols to be arrayed in said multiple symbol columns and rows;

displaying the initial symbols selected in an array of multiple symbol columns and rows on said monitor;

allowing the player to designate [designating] a chosen number, from one [none] to all, of said initial displayed symbols for replacement;

selecting said chosen number of replacement symbols;

replacing said chosen number of initial symbols on said monitor with replacement symbols;

determining whether said replacement symbols and any remaining initial symbols arrayed in said multiple symbol columns and rows constitute a winning combination by assessing whether particular symbols are aligned horizontally, vertically,

diagonally or in another geometric pattern which matches a predetermined winning combination; and,

rewarding a winning combination.

33. (Amended) A method of operating an electronic gaming apparatus having a plurality of symbols arrayed in multiple symbol columns and rows on its monitor comprising the steps of:

selecting initial symbols to be arrayed in said multiple symbol columns and rows;

displaying the initial symbols selected in an array of multiple symbol columns and rows on said monitor after a display of a simulated spinning motion;

designating a chosen number, from one [none] to all, of said initial displayed symbols for replacement;

selecting said chosen number of replacement symbols;

replacing said chosen number of initial symbols on said monitor with replacement symbols after the display of a simulated spinning motion;

determining whether said replacement symbols and any remaining initial symbols arrayed in said multiple symbol columns and rows constitute a winning combination; and,

rewarding a winning combination.

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35. (Amended) A method of operating an electronic gaming apparatus having a plurality of symbols arrayed in multiple symbol columns and rows on its monitor so as to appear to be on a plurality of vertical reels comprising the steps of:

selecting initial symbols to be arrayed in said multiple symbol columns and rows;

displaying the initial symbols selected in an array of multiple symbol columns and rows on said monitor so as to appear to be on a plurality of vertical reels;

designating a chosen number, from one [none] to all, of said initial displayed symbols for replacement;

selecting said chosen number of replacement symbols;

replacing said chosen number of initial symbols on said monitor with replacement symbols;

determining whether said replacement symbols and any remaining initial symbols arrayed in said multiple symbol columns and rows constitute a winning combination; and,

rewarding a winning combination.

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